

Exhibit 9

WELDBEND CORPORATION

6600 SOUTH HARLEM AVENUE • ARGO, IL 60501-1930

February 19, 2016

PHONES

773 - 582 - 3500
708 - 594 - 1700

FAX

773 - 582 - 7621
708 - 458 - 0108

The Honorable Thomas M. Durkin

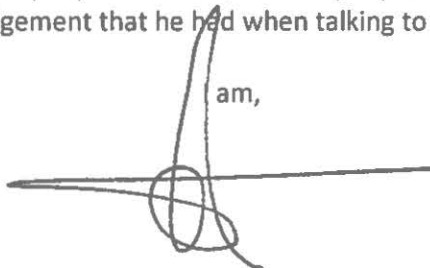
Dear Honorable Judge Durkin:

My name is James Coulas. I run a family business on the south side of Chicago that my parents started a little over 65 years ago (about my age). Along with me, my two older sisters work at the family company, as well as my wife, my two sons, one daughter and one nephew. I tell you this to give you a little bit of a background that I come from a family that cherishes the family tradition.

I am writing you today with deep understanding of the seriousness of the charges against Dennis Hastert. I have known Mr. Hastert for a relatively short number of years, starting in about 2002. I have dealt with Denny on both professional and personal levels and in all our dealings I have never known any other politician to be any more upright, professional, honest and a man of his word. I have known Mr. Hastert more in a personal and family relationship than any professional dealings I have had with the Speaker. I have seen how he interacts with his children, with his wife and other people, and as they say, "what you see is what you get." He has always shown the utmost courtesy to everyone he meets and always takes time for talking with people.

Just as everyone who has heard the charges, I was most shocked, and as I get older, I understand that you do things in your younger life that you would like to take back, but as we know, that cannot be done. That is what the term "growing up and getting older and wiser" means. I am not making any excuses for Denny. He shouldn't have lied to the Feds, but I am sure he felt he was being pushed into a corner with no way out. As I have said in the beginning, I am a family man running a family business with my family, and there is nobody that I would trust with my family more than Denny Hastert.

In your sentencing, please take into consideration all the good things that Mr. Hastert has done for not only the people of Illinois, but the people of our country, and forgive him for the lapse of judgement that he had when talking to the Feds.

am,


James J. Coulas, Jr.